



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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HB 2049-82  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR  
THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

Statement for  
House Committee on  
Energy, Ecology & Environmental Protection  
Public Hearing - 19 February 1982

By  
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HB 2049 calls for an appropriation to the Office of Environmental Quality Control to cover certain salaries and raises. This statement on the bill has been reviewed in draft by the Legislative Subcommittee of the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii. However, it does not represent an institutional position of the University.

The Environmental Center does not ordinarily advise on proposed appropriations for continuing environmental functions. However, there are special circumstances regarding the Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) that warrant Center comments on the appropriation proposed in HB 2049.

The act that created the OEQC provided that it was to be headed by a Director who had very important responsibilities for advising the governor and providing interdepartmental coordination in environmental matters. The act also provided for a staff for the OEQC, but not as a part of the Civil Service, so that the staff do not receive raises through normal Civil Service procedures.

The Director's position is now vacant, and there is not even provision in the budget for the Director's salary. There are also several vacancies in the OEQC staff.

Without a director and an adequate staff, the OEQC cannot properly carry out its functions. Problems have arisen in connection with state, federal, county, private and cooperative projects through recent inadequacies in the coordinating competence of the OEQC and that have or are likely to be costly both environmentally and financially.

HB 2049 would make appropriations to cover both the salary of the OEQC director and salary increases for the staff. Assuming the amounts to be appropriated are not yet prescribed in the bill, but assuming the salary levels it will allow are commensurate with the respective responsibilities, the provisions of the bill will be very appropriate.

A provision alternative or supplementary to the provision for staff salary raises that might be considered, although not in an appropriation bill, would be one granting Civil Service status to the OEQC staff. Considering the present salary levels of the staff, however, some special provision might be necessary to assure that, if the positions are converted to Civil Service ones, the levels assigned to them adequately represent the staff responsibilities.